Getting Reimbursed: A Series of Mini Webinars on the New Testing Codes - Part Two

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Nicole Owings-Fonner: Welcome to our new webinar series entitled “Getting Reimbursed: Updates on Billing and Documentation for Psychological and Neuropsychological Testing”. My name is Nicole Owings-Fonner and I’m in the Communications department here at APA. This webinar is a little bit different than some of our other webinars in that we’re not airing it live and we are dividing the content into sections that will be more manageable for you to view, watch, and find exactly what you’re looking for. This series will present... be presented by Dr. Jared Skillings and additional APA staff, Dr. Antonio Puente, Dr. Neil Pliskin, Dr. Steven Gillaspy, and Dr. Michael Westerveld.

Our objectives for this series are to provide you with an update on APA Services, Inc.’s advocacy efforts related to testing codes, to briefly review the testing codes and definitions, to address major billing and documentation developments. We'll also discuss how to document your work and demonstrate how to apply the new codes using expanded practical examples. Lastly, our experts will provide responses to the most frequently asked questions that you've submitted.

Dr. Neil Pliskin: So, here's the overview. If you're looking at the left-hand side of this... of this busy figure, what you see is that you're in ... In the current year, you're using 90791 – psychiatric diagnostic interview – for your “capture your clinical interview portion” of the evaluation and you will do that again in 2019. But the old codes, or soon to be old codes, of 96101 and 96102 will be deleted, and in their place will be separate codes if the testing and scoring is done by the qualified healthcare professional, psychologist, or if it's done by a technician.

So, if you look at 96101 and you look down there, then in the oran... yellow squares are 96136 (the base) and 96137 (the add-on) for if the psychologist or other qualified healthcare professional does their own testing, and scoring. Or if you look to the right-hand side of that figure in the red boxes, you have the 96138 and 96139, the base and the add-on. Note: 30 minutes for test administration, data gathering, and scoring done by the technician. Whether you're doing psychological testing or you're doing neuropsychological testing, these are the test administration and scoring codes that you would use.

If you're doing a psychological evaluation, the professional services provided by the psychologist or other QHP – qualified healthcare professional – now it's coded separately with the base code 96130 for the first hour, and the add-on code 96131 for each additional hour. Again – the clear distinction between what are test administration and scoring services and what are the professional services provided by the qualified healthcare professional.

We've just finished talking about the left-hand column 96116; when we look at the code 96118, which is about to be deleted: again, we're seeing the split between what are professional services and what are test administration and scoring services. Test administration and scoring by psychologist in the yellow box: 96136, 96137 - base and add-on like we've been discussing. First 30 minutes and then each additional 30 minutes, and if the testing is done by a technician under the supervision of the qualified health care professional, looking to the right side of the diagram, 96119 is to be deleted and will be replaced by 96138 (the base), 96139 (the add-on). Each 30 minutes, first 30 minutes, and then each additional 30 minutes.

The other new element is the separation of the professional services from the test administration and scoring – whether that's done by the professional or by the technician, and the professional services for test evaluation is now coded 96132 for the first hour, 96133 for each additional hour.